

# MESOPOTAMIAN MINUTE

- *Current News on Agriculture & USDA in Iraq* -  
Office of Agricultural Affairs, U.S. Embassy, Baghdad  
Sunday, March 14, 2010



**Iraqi Vote Milestone** – On March 7 Iraqis defied acts of terrorism to participate en masse in historic parliamentary elections. Now the hard work of forming a new government begins a process that could take months. AgBaghdad will be part of the international effort to brief the incoming government.

**Grain and Feed Report** –After two years of drought, the current outlook for Iraq's national winter grain production is favorable due to increased winter grain acreage and beneficial rains. National wheat area is estimated at 1.47 million hectares (up 22 % from last year, but 22 % below normal). Quality and policy

factors indicate two-thirds of the wheat crop will be used for feed. Our [GAIN](#) Grain & Feed report provides complete production, supply, and demand estimates for Iraq.

**Gulfood** –OAA Baghdad organized a group of 33 Iraqi food product company representatives to attend Gulfood, the Middle East's largest and most important event for the food processing and retail industries, February 21-24, 2010 in Dubai.



At Gulfood, Iraqi poultry importers expanded their business to include U.S. beef.



PRT Team leader Rick Roberts presents Books to the Babil Central Library

## USDA Donates Science

**Books** – On February 28, the Babil Provincial

Reconstruction Team delivered several hundred books on biological science to the Hillah Central Library. The books, a donation from USDA, fulfilled a request from Babil's Chief Librarian and will help the provinces veterinary and medical students. The event was covered by local TV, radio and print media. The library also has a U.S.-funded internet connection and the PRT is assisting with the library's physical expansion. PRT Team leader Rick Roberts presents Books to the Babil Central Library

**Personnel Update** – There are currently 36 USDA personnel in Iraq including those with Provisional Reconstruction Teams (PRTs), the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad, or embedded with U.S. military units. Soil scientist Mike Gangwer and Attaché Paul Spencer leave on R&R. Our DVM Jessica McCoy and agri-business advisor Mohammed Ibrahim return from R&R. Anbar PRT AgAdvisor Eric Dolbeare is finishing his tour.

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